

FUNDAMENTAL TECHNIQUES OF PLASTIC SURGERY AND THEIR SURGICAL APPLICATIONS. By Ian McGregor, M.B., F.R.C.S. Second Edition. (Pp. xi + 286; illustrated. 32s. 6d.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1962.

THAT a second edition of this book has been called for some two years after the first appearance shows that it has been well received.

Written by a plastic surgeon for those who have had no formal training in plastic surgery it is divided into two sections. In the first a detailed description is given of the basic techniques of plastic surgery, with chapters devoted to wound care, the use of free skin grafts and the various types of pedicle grafts. In the second part the author considers the application of these techniques to situations which general and orthopaedic surgeons are likely to encounter.

The usefulness of this second edition has been enhanced by the addition of an excellent chapter on maxillo-facial injuries and the opportunity has been taken to exclude some of the more complicated eyelid reconstructive procedures which were described in the first edition.

The book is well illustrated with carefully chosen photographs and clear line drawings and a short bibliography is included at the end of each chapter.

The author is to be congratulated on covering the subject in such a clear and concise manner and it is to be hoped that in future editions he will resist the temptation to expand and extend the scope of the book. In its present form it provides an excellent introduction to practical surgery and should be carefully read by all trainee surgeons. N. C. H.

AIDS TO THE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF DISEASES OF CHILDREN. By F. M. B. Allen, M.D., F.R.C.P., and I. J. Carré, M.A., M.D.(Cantab.), M.R.C.P., D.C.H. Eleventh Edition. (Pp. 36. 15s.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1962.

ONE of the great qualities of the Belfast Medical School is the emphasis laid on the practical aspects of medicine and the formation of competent clinicians. This handbook carries on that tradition, for it eliminates much that is no longer current practice and selects from recent research what is of real value in the actual care of infants and sick children. It is not merely an examination aid, but a lasting help to the practitioner, whether family doctor or junior paediatrician.

It is indeed quite remarkable how much has been packed into what is still quite a convenient pocket book. To select only a few examples from the new material presented :—

There is an account of partial thoracic stomach (a subject which Dr. Carré has made particularly his own). There is an excellent summary of the major varieties of congenital heart disease and the methods by which they are investigated. In the section on endocrine and metabolic disorders the account of adrenal dysfunction is particularly good, and though compressed into only five pages, the outline given of the hereditary biochemical disorders suffices for all general purposes. The new chapter on joint and bone disease includes a brief description of infantile cortical hyperostosis, only lately recognised in this region; the management of micrognathia, and the technique of Ortolani's sign in diagnosis of congenital dislocation of the hip joint.

Special problems of the new-born are well treated. These include, among new items, the clinical aspects of hyaline membrane formation and of cold injury. The risks to be guarded against in the use of intratracheal oxygen as a resuscitative measure are emphasised. The account of haemolytic disease of the new-born is admirably simplified and yet contains all that is needed for the intelligent management of the problem in practice.

Since there has never been a distinction made between medical and surgical conditions in childhood, both alike coming first under the paediatrician's notice, the commoner surgical diagnosis are described in generally sufficient detail. A suspicion of oesophageal atresia should, however, be aroused by snuffing and dribbling of excessive frothy mucus *before* the first feed produces choking and cyanosis.

Sufficient space is devoted to the management of breast feeding to impress on the reader that the authors really do believe in its superiority. The section on artificial feeding effects a neat compromise between the detailed calculations required for examination purposes, and the basic practical principle that "whenever an infant appears unsatisfied, it is a good policy to offer more." Later, under the heading of "Behaviour Problems," refusal of food is discussed rather too optimistically. A day's starvation rarely suffices to remove a difficulty which has much deeper roots than mere capriciousness, and while it cannot be expected that emotional disturbances can be dealt with fully in the tiny space available, this particular trouble is one that every doctor meets so certainly that he should be forewarned of the demands it will make on his—and the mother's—patience.

It is not possible to go into the details of the excellent accounts given of a host of infective and other conditions. The section on blood diseases, however, and especially that part which deals with coagulation defects, deserves special mention. So does Dr. Beare's admirable chapter on Skin Diseases, which, incidentally, contains the liveliest writing in the book, as, for example, "when dealing with symptomless warts one should not be too enthusiastic and should remember that there is a 50 per cent. cure rate on a three-month waiting list."

The eminently practical character of the book is enhanced by clear and precise indications of dosage for all drugs mentioned. The Appendices, besides diets suitable for most metabolic disorders and a comprehensive table of antibiotic and chemotherapeutic agents and their indications, contain a wealth of data of as much value to the senior, whose memory is not what it once was, as to the junior who still has to satisfy the examiners.

Seventy years have now passed since the publication of the first edition of this volume of the "Aids" series. Prof. Allen, Dr. Carré and their collaborators may be well content that, thanks to them, even at this ripe age it has lost nothing of its vigour and is more useful than ever.

M. J. L. F.

AN INTRODUCTION TO DIAGNOSTIC NEUROLOGY: A COURSE OF INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS. By Stewart Renfrew. Vol. I (pp. viii + 188; illustrated. 12s. 6d.) Vol. II (pp. vii + 215; illustrated. 12s. 6d.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1962.

THESE two small volumes are designed to serve as a guide for students in their early clinical years. They are to the classical textbook of neurology as a manual of dissection would be to the anatomical tome. The student is assumed to have some knowledge of Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology and Dr. Renfrew leads him through the wards casting pearls of clinical experience. The neurological examination is dealt with in three parts (each part is anticipated to occupy the work of an academic term). These are:—

- (1) Motor signs and diseases which are purely motor;
- (2) Sensory signs and diseases which are partly sensory;
- (3) Cerebral signs and intracranial diseases.

The first chapter to each part deals with the language of empirical science and one detects in them an overwhelming desire to clarify which at times defeats its own purpose by being confusing, and this tendency runs through all the book.

Early on is encountered one of the main themes, that of the clinical distinction between long-tract (L.T.) and segmental tract (S.T.) motor signs. (The abbreviations L.T. and S.T. appear in the introduction but it is only in the fourth chapter that one finds their explanation). Certain virtual clinical mnemonics are given which will not find favour with everyone, i.e. (from fig. 19) "If L.T. weakness and increased jerks are present but unconvincing, test for clonus . . ."

Certainly Dr. Renfrew has written an unusual work. I thought the sign-time graph an excellent way of illustrating simply to the student the all-important natural history of a disease. Many of the diagrams which demonstrate methods of testing are beautifully clear. Teachers of neurology will find many points of interest to stimulate discussion. However, one feels that like a manual of dissection this work will have a limited appeal to students.